

*Commissioned by Percy Browning and Cornell University Chorus,
Scott Tucker, Director*

Louise McNeill was born in 1911 in Pocahontas County, West Virginia, on a farm that her family had lived on for nine generations. She once stated, "Until I was sixteen years old, until the roads came, the farm was about all I knew: our green meadows and hilly pastures, our storied old men, the great rolling seasons of moon and sunlight, our limestone cliffs and trickling springs." Louise McNeill was appointed Poet Laureate of West Virginia in 1979. She died in 1993.

Program Note:

When reading "Where Do the Roads Go?" alongside this striking quote by McNeill, I could readily imagine the deep sense of longing and wonder that must have come from a girl of sixteen living an isolated life in the hills. The thought of roads "coming" sounded so extreme to someone like me, born and raised in "Motor City" in the 1960s. I fell in love with the poem immediately and the music seemed to write itself.

-Sally Lamb McCune

Performance Suggestion:

Where Do the Roads Go? is one of three Appalachian texts set by Sally Lamb McCune, and may be sung in combination with **Jubilee** (15/2962R) and **Go Dig My Grave** (15/2963R) to form a set.

Where Do the Roads Go?

For my Parents, Bettie Jane and Chuck Wilkinson

SSAA and Piano

Words by
Louise McNeill (1911-1993)
from "The Roads"

Music by
Sally Lamb McCune

Ranges: Soprano 1 Soprano 2 Alto 1 Alto 2

Rubato, Broad, Sustained, Warm ♩ = ca. 78

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6 S1 *mp*
Where do _ the roads go, the ruined coun-try

S2 *mp*
Where do _ the roads go, the ruined coun-try

A1 *mp*
Where do _ the roads go, the ruined coun-try

A2 *mp*
Where do _ the roads go, the ruined coun-try

p
p 3

8^{vb}... | (continue to pedal at player's discretion, maintaining a sustained sound) 8^{vb}... |

9
roads flow, Fern-clogged and weed - bogged, 3

roads flow, Fern-clogged and weed - bogged, 3

roads flow, Fern-clogged and weed - bogged, 3

roads flow, Fern-clogged and weed - bogged, 3

3 3 3

8^{vb}... |

12

poco accel.
mf

Wan- der- ing the hills,
Wan- der - ing the hills,
Wan - der - ing the

poco accel.

14

poco rit.

No - where,
No - where,
hills, No - where,
No - where,

delicato

mf *p*

6
16

No - where that
No - where that
No - where that
No - where that

8^{vb}-----]

18

poco rit . . .

I know, By shad - blow and fence - row,
I know, By shad - blow and fence-row,
I know,
I know,

poco rit . . .
mp

20 *a little slowly*

mp *a tempo*

By rot-ted sills.
By rot-ted sills.
By the woods where li-lacs grow, By rot-ted sills.
By the woods where li-lacs grow, By rot-ted sills.

a little slowly *a tempo*

8^{va}...

23

poco rit. *a tempo*

mf

What can_ a
What can_ a
What can_ a
What can_ a
What can_ a

mf *mf* *mf* *mf* *mf*

poco rit. *a tempo*

8^{va}...

road feel? How can this

road feel? How can this

road__ feel? How can this

road__ feel? How can this

The piano accompaniment consists of a right-hand part with eighth-note patterns and a left-hand part with a similar rhythmic accompaniment.

sor - row heal? Sole__ mark and

sor - row heal? Sole__ mark and

sor - row heal? Sole__ mark and

sor - row heal? Sole__ mark and

The piano accompaniment continues with the same rhythmic patterns as in the previous system.

29 *poco rit* - - - - - , 9

wag-on wheel pass-ing through the day, _____ ,

wag-on wheel pass-ing through the day, _____ ,

wag-on wheel pass-ing through the day, _____ ,

wag-on wheel pass-ing through the day, _____ ,

poco rit
8^{va} - - - - - ,

32 *a tempo*
mp

Grain load and ap - ple load_

Grain load and ap - ple load_ *p* creak-ing down the hill-y road,_

creak-ing down the hill-y road,_

a tempo
(8)

p subito

10
34

mp
All of the life that flowed Now

mp
All of the life that flowed Now

mp
All of the life that flowed Now

mp
All of the life that flowed Now

(8)

mp

36

poco rit.

gone a - way.

gone a - way.

gone a - way.

gone a - way.

poco rit.
8^{va}

38 *a tempo* *mf*

Where do__ the roads wind?

mf

Where do__ the roads wind?

mf

Where do__ the roads wind?

mf

Where do__ the roads wind?

a tempo

f *mf*

8^{vb}...1

40

What do they go to find,

What do they go to find,

What do they go to find,

What do they go to find,

What do they go to find,

Cross-ing on the moun-tain tops and meet-ing by the shores,-

Cross-ing on the moun-tain tops and meet-ing by the shores,-

8^{va}...

dreamily mp

Swamp - locked and bri - ar blocked,

dreamily mp

Swamp - locked and bri - ar blocked,

dreamily mp

Swamp - locked and bri - ar blocked,

dreamily mp

Swamp - locked and bri - ar blocked,

mp

47

Search-ing for the rib-rocked men of moun-tain stock,

Search-ing for the rib-rocked men of moun-tain stock,

Search-ing for the rib-rocked men of moun-tain stock,

Search-ing for the rib-rocked men of moun-tain stock,

49

by their emp - ty doors,

by their emp - ty doors,